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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0934
INFO AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT

S E C R E T TASHKENT 000823

SIPDIS
DEPT FOR SCA/CEN
DS/IP/SCA
AMEMBASSY ASTANA PASS TO USOFFICE ALMATY
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PASS TO AMEMBASSY PODGORICA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/05/27
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UZ](#)
SUBJECT: Apparent Terrorist Attacks in Eastern Uzbekistan

CLASSIFIED BY: Nicholas Berliner, Pol-Econ Chief; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

[11](#). (C) Several years of relative calm was broken in Uzbekistan's Andijon province on May 26 when a group of assailants armed with AK-47s attacked security force installations in the town of Khanabad on the border with Kyrgyzstan. Information on the attack and ensuing firefight is sketchy. An official statement from the General Prosecutor's Office said that one police officer and one assailant were wounded, but Embassy RSO sources report that Uzbek security forces sustained several casualties before the assailants fled. Later in the day, in the city of Andijon, a suicide bomber killed one policeman and wounded several civilians. RSO sources also report an explosion in a store in Andijon in which security forces surrounded a group of suspects, but we have no other confirmation of that incident or possible casualties.

[12](#). (S) Uzbek authorities have said the attacks were the work of terrorists, a scenario supported by news reports that the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) has claimed responsibility for the attacks. However, there is also speculation that the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) could have been behind the attacks. Embassy's Pol-Mil Section has been in contact with the Uzbek National Security Service (NSS) and has offered cooperation, but has not received any additional information from the GOU at this time.

[13](#). (C) Embassy's EAC convened on May 26 and post will issue a revised Warden Message today. Embassy's DATT will travel to the Ferghana Valley on May 28 to observe the situation firsthand. The Ambassador spoke to the Uzbek Foreign Ministry on May 26 and urged the GOU to be transparent about these events in order to limit rumors and speculation that had already begun to circulate when word of the attacks reached Tashkent. Although the facts of the events are still not clear, the relatively quick statement from the General Prosecutor's Office was uncharacteristic for a government that is usually loathe to release any information.

[14](#). (C) Incidents of this kind naturally rekindle memories of the 2005 events in Andijon or years before when terrorist attacks were not an uncommon occurrence in Uzbekistan. The fact that yesterday's attacks occurred in the Ferghana Valley, considered to be the most

volatile region of all of Central Asia, only added to the sense of unease. However, indications at this time are that these were terrorist attacks directed at Uzbek security forces. In no way do they appear to be of a domestic political nature and the GOU appears to be fully in control of the situation. Although the GOU was clearly concerned and sent the Prime Minister to the scene, President Karimov appears to have departed as planned for a scheduled visit to Brazil. There are also reports here that the GOU has closed schools in the region and asked people to remain at home for the next several days, all it seems in an effort to avoid any semblance of a repeat of the 2005 events when civilians got caught in the crossfire in Andijon.

NORLAND